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ABSTRACT

While technological advances have transformed man's social and cultural environment and increased the interconnection between individuals and cultures, they have not in themselves led to a deeper understanding of other cultures. Educational programs can play an important role in remedying this defect and in developing students' sensitivity to other cultures as well as promoting an increased awareness of world issues. Within this framework and within the context of dramatic socioeconomic changes in Hawaii, a course in intercultural communications was developed at Kauai Community College. An existing model was adapted to the particular needs and conditions of the college and community, resulting in: (1) the adoption of a workshop format; (2) offering the course for credit; (3) the inclusion of a significant amount of the theory and principles of intercultural communication; and (4) the integration into the course of a weekend camping retreat which emphasized participation, communal involvement, and sharing of cross-cultural information. The course sought to increase the awareness, understanding, respect, and appreciation of cultural differences through discussions on common social experiences (e.g., friendship, male/female roles, and family patterns) and through the interaction of participations with different cultural backgrounds. During the ten years that the course has been offered, a great variety of students have participated in the course and endorsed it enthusiastically. (HB)

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A Paper Presented at the Conference of the National Association for Asian and Pacific American Education (Honolulu, Hawaii, April 23-24, 1981)

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Cross-cultural Training in the Community College Curriculum.

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In centuries past, it was taken for granted that the really crucial problem for humans everywhere was one of technology. People found it imperative to master the difficulties of securing fast and dependable transportation, potable water, sufficient food, and adequate shelter. Although much of the world is still short of these basics, the necessary technology for producing them is now known. The problem has moved from the realm of scientific discovery to the arena of engineering and application.[1]

In this manner, just as Maslow's theory of the "Hierarchy of Needs" says that an individual whose physiological requirements are met will then proceed to seek social and psychological satisfactions,[2] so has the entire human species moved to a position in which our most urgent problems are no longer technical but cultural. In fact, they are not merely cultural, but are most often cross-cultural.

This shift which brought primacy to cross-cultural problems is mainly due to drastic improvements in international transportation and communication. The vision of "one world" which so strongly imbued the pronouncements of presidential candidate Wendell Willkie on the eve of World War II has now become a reality. Multinational corporations, mass tourism covering the globe, international labor unions, virtually instant television coverage of any significant event happening anywhere, and supersonic jets which

whisk people between continents and cultures with an illusion of effortless ease all contribute to the change as well as symbolize it. The really telling aspect of this whole transformation, however, lies in the fact that these changes are not just experienced by international businessmen, statesmen, and scholars, but are now thrust upon even those who stay at home. Small communities and local neighborhoods now discover that cross-cultural currents eddy at their doors.

As this new awareness spreads and deepens among the peoples of the world, a disconcerting corollary is likewise brought to the fore. This is the finding that humans everywhere are much more willing to change their technology than to alter their attitudes, values, norms, social definitions, or folkways.[3] Thus flashlights and radios gain almost instant acceptance; while ideas about "parenting" and national defense change slowly, for innovations in such realms are regarded with grave doubts and suspicion.

So it is that the transformation of conditions governing international interaction have rendered all of us much more vulnerable to changes which occur anywhere on earth. The 1978 report on Internationalizing Community Colleges cites the Chancellor of the Swedish Universities who sees internationalized education as essential for human survival in a shrinking world.[4] This, therefore, means that we have a strong justification for constructing a curriculum which aims at building competency for cross-cultural relationships. It further suggests that this competency should not just be the goal and province of a few privileged students who are taking advanced university courses as part of specialized

graduate programs, but should be something for all students who are in any sort of educational program beyond the basics. In this particular regard, it seems that we have a rather distinctive situation in the Community College System of which the writers are a part, since our community colleges were developed from a network which was formerly made up of technical schools. As a result, it appears that the focus on internationalizing education and the importance of cross-cultural relationships has been quite a bit slower to gain acceptance than might have been true in a system which grew from a different base.

Another perspective on this question comes to us from the document that is dubbed "The Perkins Report" which, as mandated by the President of the United States, presents the conclusions of a commission regarding education in foreign languages and international studies.[5] Although many educators have chosen to emphasize the Commission's conclusions pertaining to instruction in foreign languages, the report also says much -- in very decisive terms -- about cross-cultural studies. The Commission points out that it becomes a problem of national security when people in our changing world today do not have the ability to relate easily to those from other societies and cultures.[6] The schools are accordingly charged with the task of developing in their students a sensitivity to other cultures as well as an increased awareness of world issues.

The report goes on to recommend that there should be new curricula which incorporate teaching about other countries and

international problems and thereby try to eliminate the stereotyping of people from other cultures.[7] It is further mentioned that special efforts should be made to foster international and cross-cultural education in the community colleges.[8] This directive is justified by citing the fact that almost half of all undergraduates in the U.S. today are enrolled in community colleges. It is for this reason that the Commission insists that special attention should be paid to the community colleges in developing this committment to international and cross-cultural education.[9] Furthermore, the faculty members of these community colleges should be likewise encouraged to personally pursue this avenue of study and instruction.

The foregoing, then, provide an overview of the general intellectual framework which underlay our initial efforts to develop a course on cross-cultural communication within the community college milieu. An additional consideration which especially applies to community colleges has been brought forward by Dr. James Downs. Dr. Downs noted that not only is the modern world impinging on everyone--not just on people who travel to faraway lands--but that there are now millions of people who are in what he terms, "operational" occupations.[10] These "operational people" are those individuals who work with social, rather than technical or economic facts. According to recent data from the U.S. Census, such occupations are rapidly growing into one of the largest career-categories in the U.S. today. It seems that a very large percentage of the students who seek such "operational" careers--perhaps even the majority of them--are enrolling in community colleges. The basic point of Downs' discussion is that such "operational people"

are particularly in need of cross-cultural training and international education if they are to be effective in the modern world.

Above and beyond the special needs of the students who are oriented toward "operational" occupations, however, stands the conviction that instruction in cross-cultural communication and relationships is beneficial for all students because it helps them to perceive their own culture as only one of many possible modes of effective thinking and acting. Such learning can likewise give these students further insight into the roots of their own immediate problems and concerns. Let us now turn to the specific situation of our own College here in Hawaii and the more local and individual factors which led us to an involvment with cross-cultural education.

One of the prominent conditions which seemed to indicate a serious need for some special type of cross-cultural education is the multi-cultural social system of Hawaii itself, for the islands of the State have an extraordinary variety of peoples and cultures which have been brought together in very close proximity. However, observers have noted that, despite their rather casual acceptance of many peoples and cultures as a regular part of daily life, most of the residents' interaction remains on what might be called "cultural surfaces". In other words, many people in Hawaii have a general attitude of cultural pluralism and yet at the same time have a considerable naivete and absolute misinformation about some of the deeper parts of the cultures of their co-workers and next-door neighbors. Thus, for example, it is

not unusual to have someone ask, "Isn't it true that Filipino women are dictators in their families?", or, "Isn't it true that Japanese women never oppose the wishes of their husbands?" These sorts of questions very directly bring forward the kinds of issues that we intended to address by some type of cross-cultural education.

Another factor which generated a certain urgency about initiating efforts toward cross-cultural learning in our College is the fact that Hawaii and its people are going through a great deal of change. The economy is rapidly moving from agriculture to a system based almost entirely on tourism. This has been accompanied by drastic transformations in community life as people leave the old plantation camps, which were close to the classic type of village Gemeinschaft groupings that Ferdinand Tonnies wrote about, and enter the Gesellschaft sort of pattern. They break away from old, long-established neighborhood structures and move into suburban-like areas which bear more than a superficial resemblence to the "tract housing" that has flooded parts of the U.S. mainland. Working relationships undergo a corresponding shift as people become employed in international corporations which are directly or indirectly involved in tourism.

The results of these changes have affected the entire society and culture of Hawaii. The population itself has increased, the numbers of visitors to the State now number in the millions per year, and social contacts in general have now become much more international, unavoidable, commercial, and yet superficial.

Many events which have produced the more dramatic repercussions on the Neighbor Islands of Hawaii occurred after the Community College System began in 1965. Thus on the island of Kauai the opening of the community college was soon followed by the arrival of a much improved system for re-broadcasting television programs, the reversal of a population decline, and a startling rise of 174% in the daily visitor count between 1967 and 1977 while the crime rate went up 227% during the same period.[11] Such data provide some indication of the various factors which generated the marked increase of social stress and cross-cultural tensions which seemed to burgeon forth on Kauai. With these considerations in mind, let us now turn to an account of how the course was actually developed in Kauai Community College.

First of all, it should be noted that the two persons most directly responsible for this curricular innovation, the authors of this paper, both had many years of experience in living and working outside of the U.S.A. These experiences made both of us very much aware of the problems of cross-cultural communication, and the great need for understanding the dynamics of all cultures. However, the attitudes, values, interests, and ideas gained from these international contacts did not focus upon any particular part of our College curriculum until we learned about a program being sponsored by the National Association for Foreign Student Affairs.

In 1970, a newsletter from the Association which reached our campus carried in it an announcement that a Leaders Workshop in

Intercultural Communications would be offered near Fresno, California. People who wished to learn how to conduct such workshops were invited to apply. Mark Summers had obtained materials describing such workshops, and after reading through them and discussing the item in the newsletter, it was agreed that some one from our campus should attend the Leaders Workshop in Fresno. Arrangements were accordingly made, and Richard Coller was selected as the person to go and learn how to conduct a workshop in intercultural communications.

One of the first things learned was that the "leader" does not actually "run" such a workshop, but instead plays the role of "facilitator". This experience in Fresno not only provided some guidelines, but also furnished ideas about instructional materials, the theory and philosophy of intercultural communication, and information about how other agencies and organizations were offering this type of workshop. Since there were representatives from many different colleges plus personnel from such agencies as the YMCA and YWCA groups, a considerable variety of ideas and techniques were presented.

A perusal of the Fresno materials made it apparent that there were at least three different ways in which courses in intercultural communication were being offered on the U.S. mainland. The three which came to our attention are as follows:

1. The weekend, "short course" variety.
   - offered on huge campuses by advertising through posters and other media.
   - is the original format developed on the U.S. mainland.
   - does not provide college credit.
   - sponsored by student services or foreign student advisor.

- enrollment is controlled to get a "good mix" of foreign students, state residents, out-of-state students, graduates, undergraduates, etc.
- leaves campus about Friday noon and returns late Sunday afternoon.
- consists almost entirely of carefully-organized inter-cultural "experiences" plus thoroughgoing discussions of their significance.
- held in remote rural camp or "retreat". Participants do all of their own housekeeping, etc. All pay a fee of about $10.00 to buy food and pay for rental of the facility.

2. The modular "short course" type of about six weeks duration.
   - offered by some colleges as a regular course.
   - provides college credit, (usually one or two).
   - registration through regular channels, but efforts are made to have a "good mix" of students.
   - class sessions have films, discussions of assigned readings, and tests.
   - the course ends with a weekend "retreat", but it is likely to be shorter than the kind mentioned above.

3. The "purely academic" semester-length course.
   - aimed at an advanced level of theory and analysis.
   - organized as a one semester, three credit course.
   - includes comprehensive readings, lectures, written assignments, regular examinations, and classroom audio-visual materials.
   - no weekend "retreat".
   - easy "fit" into usual college schedules for students and staff.
   - no need to limit class size or seek a "good mix" of students.

After reviewing these data and ideas from Fresno, it was agreed that the general format of an intercultural communications workshop did seem to be the kind of instructional mode that might best achieve our goals. It also seemed to be an approach which would be readily applicable to the unique conditions prevailing at our College and in our community.

However, efforts to prepare a specific course proposal for an intercultural communications course at Kauai Community College soon made it clear that a sizable amount of modifications and adaptations were required for our local environment.

First of all, it was realized that it was necessary to have credits given for the workshop. Although some groups on the U.S. mainland have been able to successfully offer intercultural communication workshops on a non-credit basis, such an arrangement did not seem feasible at our College. For one thing, Kauai Community College is a totally commuter school. There are no domitories and, even more than that, most of the students have off-campus jobs. A large percentage of those working students are employed full-time, and so are carrying a 40-hour per week workload in addition to their courses at the College. For this reason, most students at Kauai Community College do not have the spare time that might be found among their counterparts on other campuses. This is also tied into the desire of most KCC students to finish their degrees as soon as possible, so that they can devote all of their energies to achievement and upward mobility in the world of work. Therefore, the students are very "credit-minded" and try to accumulate as many credits as possible in the shortest time.

A second consideration which influenced the course development was the decision that the workshop should be organized as a respectable, high quality college course. We did not want it to take on the form of a low-level kind of "student activity" event which would get the reputation of being just a lot of fun and games. We sought to include a significant amount of the theory and principles of intercultural communication. It was felt that there should be regular reading assignments in reputable texts and periodic examinations on those readings. In consonance with these ideas, the course

was proposed for classification as a standard sophomore-level subject which would carry "transfer credits", that is, a student would be able to transfer the credits for this course to any four-year college or university without any problems.

The lessons learned in Fresno made it clear that if an inter-cultural communications course is offered on a strictly classroom basis consisting only of lectures and readings, it will not have any significant effects on the personal thinking and behavior of the students. Therefore, it is considered essential that a large amount of time be allotted to well-organized experiences of a cross-cultural nature as part of the course. This is why the literature on these matters refers so frequently to "experiential learning in cross-cultural situations". Colleges on the U.S. mainland can often draw upon the resources of immigrant communities in nearby urban centers plus the large numbers of foreign students on their campuses to provide such learning situations. Since the students at Kauai Community College are living on a small island and in relatively small towns, and they are engrossed in the daily routines of family life and their jobs, it was deemed important to get them away from such preoccupations and distractions for at least part of the course. It would then be possible to concentrate on experiential learning of a cross-cultural nature.

It is because of these ideas that the course has a weekend camping-retreat session as an integral, required part of the work-shop. Fortunately, the island of Kauai does have several suitable places for this activity which are maintained by various church groups and the YMCA and the YWCA, and are rented out to organized groups.

At the time that the workshop was being presented to the Curriculum Committee of Kauai Community College for approval as a regular course offering, it was discovered that such a type of course was not offered anywhere in the State of Hawaii. The University of Hawaii at Manoa, (in Honolulu) has an intercultural communications seminar, but this was intended for seniors and graduate students and so was conducted in a very different format from what we proposed to offer. Inquiries made at other colleges in the State did not disclose any course that bore a close resemblance to our proposal. The chief task, therefore, was to try to propose, plan, and implement a course for which there was no precedent within the entire State of Hawaii.

Finally, Dr. James F. Downs, a scholar whose work was cited earlier in this paper, was invited to come to Kauai Community College and consult with the Provost, Dean, and interested faculty members. Dr. Downs was chosen as a consultant because he had received considerable acclaim for the cross-cultural program which he developed at the Peace Corps Training Center in Hilo, Hawaii. He had also offered an Experimental Workshop in International Studies at the campus of the University of Hawaii in Hilo. Dr. Downs thus seemed like the most appropriate person to help us explain and justify our proposed course to our colleagues and administrators. Fortunately, our hopes were realized. After the visit of Professor Downs, the course proposal was approved.

The course was first taught by using materials that had been utilized in training Peace Corps Volunteers, and then other instructional resources were added as they were discovered in libraries

and catalogues. There has been the usual winnowing process in which materials are added, tried, and discarded or retained as they were measured against the course objectives and student responses.

Another source of ideas and teaching methods appeared when The Institute of Behavioral Sciences in Honolulu, a private corporation, began to offer intercultural communications workshops for educators as a commercial venture. The founder of this firm, Dr. Kenneth Sanborn, had also attended a leadership training workshop in intercultural communication which was conducted in Honolulu in the early 1970's by the National Association for Foreign Student Affairs. He had seen at once the possibilities of developing such workshops as a commercial enterprise in the State of Hawaii. He therefore had his staff prepare materials and design plans for short, intensive workshops in intercultural communication. One of the notable outgrowths of this effort was the production of handbooks for the workshops. Mr. Mark Summers enrolled in one of the training sessions conducted by The Institute of Behavioral Sciences and so brought back some additional ideas and materials for use on Kauai.

Other ideas that proved helpful were provided by Professor Sarah Sanderson King of the University of Hawaii at Manoa, who was offering a seminar in intercultural communication at that campus. One of our former colleagues, Mrs. Barbara Daly, enrolled in that course and received permission from Professor King to bring some of the materials to Kauai. Since these materials were designed for advanced students, they were of more use as sources

of ideas than as instructional materials for classroom use on our campus. This all brings us to the question of, "Where does this course in intercultural communications stand today, and how has it been functioning as a part of the community college curriculum?"

The first noteworthy point is that this course has now been offered almost continuously for ten years. During these ten years, it has been offered in both daytime and evening. It has been offered to both large and small groups, and has been both team-taught and offered as a one-instructor course. During this time the required readings and standard textbooks have been maintained as an integral part of the course. The works of Edward Hall, for example, are used regularly. Videotapes and films are very useful, as well as a few transparencies. One of the important features of the course is the use of intercultural simulation games. Since some of these games require several hours to "play out" and thereby bring the participants to a stage where some intercultural insights become apparent, such games are most often used during the weekend camps-retreats.

During the regular sessions on campus, the class is ordinarily seated in a circle. This encourages participation and facilitates interchange between the students. The registrar and counselors have informally agreed to try to encourage people from different cultures to enroll in the course, so that there will be a "good mix" of students. However, even without such assistance there has always been an adequate representation of various cultures among the students in the class, so that they learn a great deal from each other.

Students are encouraged to share their intercultural experiences with the group and to discuss the significance of them. As students proceed in the course and have better understanding of each other's cultural derivation, their abilities in cross-cultural analysis and interpretation show a corresponding growth.

The course proceeds at a pace which often seems to be very slow and relaxed to observers. This is because time is allowed for discussion and for students to develop enough trust and confidence in each other to share their personal experiences and reactions to them. However, because the course covers so much ground, the actual pace is really not that leisurely. Since the various discussions, exercises, and games are alternated with films, lectures, videotapes, and examinations on the readings; the course actually contains a very substantial amount of serious academic material for which the students are held responsible.

The weekend camp-retreat is the one feature of the course which elicits a considerable amount of outspoken reaction from the students. Many students, in the beginning, express a certain resentment. They feel that they are asked to do an unreasonable amount of work for the course since they are required to attend both the classes and the camp-retreat. So, when the class leaves for the camp there is a noticeable amount of foot-dragging. However, the camp is organized in a way that soon leads all members of the class into a pattern of full participation. The students and their instructor(s) plan the meals together, pool their resources, purchase the food, and do the cooking. There is no particular effort made to "rough it", so the facility usually

has semi-furnished cabins and a well-equipped kitchen. However, the campsites are quite isolated so that there are no outside distractions. This is why, as the weekend progresses, students become more interested and involved and their enthusiasm rises. Finally, when it is time to close up the camp and go, most of the students say that they hate to leave and would like to stay at the camp for a longer period.

During the camping weekend, the instructor must maintain the role of facilitator but must also join in group activities and share in such routine housekeeping chores as dishwashing, cooking, and cleaning. The instructor must likewise contribute toward the cost of the food. In these ways the instructor becomes a participating member of the workshop and is perceived as someone who is also learning and sharing cross-cultural experiences. This, then, is the general format used in the intercultural communications workshop at Kauai Community College.

The administrators of the College have given full cooperation in the offering of this course by providing the rental fees for the weekend facilities and helping with transportation.

Let us now examine the impact of this course upon the participants. The most notable outcome is that students have almost always given the workshop a strong, positive endorsement. Nearly all declare that it is the best college course that they have ever taken, or that it is the best of which they have ever heard. The curious thing is that since so many students are so enthusiastic about the workshop, one would expect them to recruit most of their friends for the course in the following semester. However, this

does not seem to happen as a usual sequel. The reasons for this absence of a "multiplier effect" are not clear, thus they could be in general registration patterns, nationwide trends, counseling policies and practices, the renewed emphasis on "core" subjects which are required for graduation, etc.

During the ten years that the course has been offered, a great variety of students have enrolled in it. These students have included teachers, nurses, office workers, specialized technicians, older married students, police officers, senior citizens, young people fresh out of high school, foreign students, students from the U.S. mainland, and those who were born and raised in Hawaii but have lived and travelled in the far corners of the world. All of these diverse people, no matter what their backgrounds, have evinced favorable reactions and enthusiastic endorsement in regard to the workshop. This strong, continuous reinforcement has provided much motivation for persevering in the hard work which this course entails for the instructors.

At the present time, enrollments in Liberal Arts subjects show a nationwide drop, and Kauai Community College is no exception to this trend. This has affected the intercultural communications course, and so there are less students in it now than were taking it during the first five years. Despite these drops, the vitality remains. The declaration of Fujio Matsuda, President of the University of Hawaii System that: "The University's mission is also to serve the nation and the Pacific and Asian people in improving intercultural understanding.",[12] aptly enunciates the general perspective which undergirds the course. Hence the

conviction remains that this is still a most appropriate course of solid merit, and so we fully intend to keep it going for at least another ten years.

FOOTNOTES

1. James F. Downs, Cultures in Crisis. Second Edition, Glencoe Press, Beverly Hills, California 1975, Introduction and Chapter 10.

2. Abraham H. Maslow, Motivation and Personality. Harper, New York, 1954.

3. Downs, ibid. pp. vi - vii. Also, Edward T. Hall, The Silent Language. Anchor Books Edition, Garden City, New York 1973, Chapter 4. A striking example in population studies is mentioned in Amos H. Hawley, "Demographic Factors in Public Administration" in Papers in Demography and Public Administration, Institute of Public Administration, University of the Philippines, Manila, January, 1954 p. 8. He observes that:

> "It is a peculiarity of mortality that sharp reductions can be achieved by relatively simple, externally applied, and non-controversial methods without immediately disturbing the status quo in other sectors of society. And while the death rate is systematically lowered, the birth rate continues at its characteristically high level for a generation or more after mortality decline begins."

4. Roger Yarrington, Editor, Internationalizing Community Colleges. Report of the 1978 Assembly of the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges at Wingspread, Racine Wisconsin. Washington, D.C. 1978 p. 13.

5. James A. Perkins, Chairman. Strength Through Wisdom: A Critique of U.S. Capability. A report to the President from the President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies. Washington, D.C., 1979.

6. Ibid., pp. 5 and 15.

7. Ibid., p. 17.

8. Ibid., p. 20.

9. Ibid., p. 28.

10. Downs, op. cit. p. xiii.

11. Mr. David R. Cleveland, Instructor in Sociology at Honolulu Community College furnished these figures from his analyses of State publications.

12. Fujio Matsuda, Mission Statement: University of Hawaii. Honolulu, Hawaii January, 1978, p. 3.

APPENDIX I

Definition and Goals of The Intercultural Communications Workshop.

An intercultural communications workshop is a special program or course conducted for a multi-cultural group of people. The participants number anywhere from 8 to 18. The number is limited to encourage discussion. The workshop is conducted and structured by a facilitator or trainer who aids the group in deriving maximum learning from their discussion and interaction.

The subjects of discussion generally focus on common social experiences undergone by most people everywhere--friendship, family patterns, male-female roles and relationships, schooling, and the patterns of interaction between different age groups. During such discussion the trainer has the duties of 1) keeping discussion on the level of personal, (but not private), experience in which everyone can participate; 2) keeping discussion interpretive rather than evaluative; and 3) providing a cognitive framework for an experiential understanding of the nature of culture and the processes of communication and interpersonal relations across cultures.

The goals of the workshop are: 1) to increase the awareness of cultural differences; 2) to increase the understanding of cultural differences; 3) to increase respect for cultural differences; 4) to build acceptance of cultural differences; 5) to develop an appreciation for the differences and merits found in various cultures; and 6) to gain much of the proceeding goals through direct, first-hand experience while interacting with the other participants who have different cultural backgrounds. All participants in the workshop should, on the whole, develop a mutual awareness of the ways that their cultural backgrounds influence their values, their behavior, and their perceptions of the world around them, (including both the social and physical environments).

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